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ABSTRACT

This document examines the issue of women and continuing education. Part one reviews the relevant research concerning employment, traditional university offerings, and vocational and educational lifestyles of women. The results of a questionnaire sent to 376 program directors are described in part two in an attempt to learn priorities for Federal funds along with some of the more successful models of programs for women. A review of educational legislation revealed that there are provisions that would permit the funding of services and/or research that would promote more effective development of programs for women. Part three assesses the impact of these activities and identifies potential funding sources for practitioners in the field. (Author/PG)

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A QUESTION OF OPPORTUNITY:

WOMEN AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

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March 31, 1973

Introduction

The "women's movement" is affecting higher education in basic ways. Using amended Executive Order 11246 which prohibits discrimination on the part of Federal contractors, women have brought charges of sex discrimination against about 10 percent of the Nation's institutions of higher education. Further changes will occur as a result of the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act of 1971 and the Education Amendments of 1972 which ban sex bias in health training programs, in employment and pay in public and private educational institutions, in all graduate admissions and in undergraduate admissions to coeducational public colleges. Concurrent with these legal challenges to institutional discrimination against women has been the steady growth of programs of "women's studies" which are examining the validity of traditional concepts about women in a wide variety of fields.

Less attention has been paid to a group of programs which predate the current phase of the "women's movement" and which usually operate at the periphery of the university in schools of continuing education. These programs, loosely categorized as "Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women," resist a clear definition or description. They range from programs which assist highly educated women of proven intellectual ability to pursue postdoctoral work on a part-time basis to lectures on current affairs offered in participants' homes at times which are convenient to them.

What is common to these programs are two assumptions. The first is that the traditional role of a woman as a homemaker and mother often precludes completion of degree programs at institutions of higher education and/or inhibits the development of a career. The programs attempt to meet the needs of women who want to combine home responsibilities with further education or to complete their formal education when their child-rearing responsibilities have lessened. Secondly, advocates of these programs accept the premise that the primary purpose of an educational institution is to serve the needs of the individual.

Meeting these needs has led to a variety of modifications in traditional university policies. Courses are scheduled at times and locations appropriate to the schedules of housewives and other women who want to return to education. Arrangements have been made to transfer college credits earned a decade earlier. Through group counseling sessions, individual attention and carefully developed introductory courses, women gradually overcome initial feelings of inadequacy and are able to adapt to traditional university schedules. Day care centers

have been established, and career counseling has led to a concern with the availability and identification of part-time jobs.

These programs offer a number of different possibilities for study. The role of the National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education is, however, determined by law as "the review of the administration and effectiveness of all federally supported extension and continuing education programs." Our particular responsibility then is to consider the impact of Federal aid in this area and to suggest ways its effect could be maximized.

We identified three areas of inquiry as a means of exploring this specific question: (1) Since some controversy exists about the necessity of providing specialized educational programs and services for women, we felt a review of relevant research concerning employment, the appropriateness of traditional university offerings, and vocational and educational lifestyles of women should precede any recommendations concerning expansion of existing support. That material is included in part I. (2) The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor published a guide, "Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women," listing 376 colleges and universities which offer programs containing special procedures or services designed specifically for women. A necessary prior step to any recommendation for Federal support was an analysis of the size, nature, method of financing, and constituency of these programs. In addition, we were particularly interested in learning of priorities for Federal funds as perceived by practitioners in the field. The results of a questionnaire sent to the 376 program directors are described in part II of this study, along with some of the more successful models of programs for women. (3) Although few of the university-based programs for women are supported by Federal funds, both the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Agriculture, through the Cooperative Extension Service, provide a wide range of training and educational opportunities for women. A review of educational legislation revealed that the Cooperative Research Act, the Vocational Education Act of 1963, the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Education Professions Development Act all have provisions which would permit the funding of services and/or research which would promote more effective development of programs for women. Our purpose in part III of the study was to assess the impact of these activities and to identify potential funding sources for practitioners in the field.

Part I

Research Relevant to Continuing Education Needs of Women

Means of acquiring or continuing education must be available to every adult at whatever point he or she broke off traditional formal schooling. The structure of adult education must be drastically revised. It must provide practicable and accessible opportunities, developed with regard for the needs of women, to complete elementary and secondary school and to continue education beyond high school. Vocational training, adapted to the Nation's growing requirement for skilled and highly educated manpower, should be included at all these educational levels. Where needed and appropriate, financial support should be provided by local, State and Federal governments and by private groups and foundations.¹

This quotation is significant for a number of reasons. By its call for the wider availability of educational opportunities for all adults, it illustrates that a focus on the special educational needs of women quickly leads to a recognition that much must be done before we can adequately serve anyone—male or female. A second significance lies in its source and date. This recommendation appeared in the prestigious report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, *American Women*, in 1963. Many other recommendations in that report have since been enacted, but the kinds of financial support and national commitment necessary for systematic provision of lifelong learning opportunities have not materialized.

Research results alone have never persuaded decisionmakers or the general public of the importance of commitment to a social goal. What is possible, however, from a review of existing research is some clarification of the reasons why specialized programs for women are necessary and what the implications of these programs may be for the field of continuing education. There is much yet to be discovered—for example, we do not know the number of women enrolled in continuing education programs—and the paucity of research confirms the peripheral attention given this field. We do have some information, however, on employment opportunities, obstacles to graduate study as perceived by women, participation rates for women in continuing education programs and female career and identity developmental processes.

Employment

Although personal enrichment will always be a major motivation for

¹ *American Women*, report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 13.

education, clearly universities also provide a crucial service by increasing vocational opportunities. Data concerning employment of women are basic to a consideration of the need for continuing education programs. Two questions are of prime importance: (1) How many women are working and what are their reasons for employment? and (2) Are women discriminated against in employment and could the provision of additional educational opportunities help alleviate this problem?

Currently, there are over 31.5 million women in the labor force. More important than this number is the change this total represents from a more rural and less technological society of 50 years ago. In 1920, 20 percent of the work force was female. Today it is 38 percent. During this period, the profile of the average woman worker has changed greatly—from that of the young (age 28) single factory worker or clerk to that of the older (age 39) married woman who may be found in any of a great number of occupations.

Of particular significance to this study is the fact that women returning to work are largely responsible for the great increase in the percentage of women in the work force. In 1970, half of all women 35 to 64 years of age were in the labor force, as compared with one out of four in 1940. During three periods of a woman's life, more than half the women of her age group are working. During the ages of 20 to 24, 58 percent are working; 51 percent of women between ages of 35 to 44 are employed, as are 54 percent of the women between the ages of 45 to 54.

Contrary to the myth that most women work only for "pin money" or for the social diversions offered by a job, of the 32 million women in the labor force in March 1971, nearly half were working because of pressing economic need. These women were either single, widowed, divorced, separated or had husbands whose incomes were less than \$3,000 a year. Another 5.4 million had husbands with incomes between \$3,000 and \$7,000—incomes which, by and large, did not meet the criteria established by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for even a low standard of living for an urban family of four.

Both rates of unemployment and figures on comparative earnings reflect a pattern of discrimination against women. In 1971, women had an unemployment rate of 5.9 percent, while that for men was 4.4 percent. The median earnings for women were only three-fifths those of men—\$4,977 and \$8,227, respectively, in 1969. Despite the current furor about "Women's Liberation" and the attention of the media to discrimination against them, women working in 1970 earned only 59.4 percent of the salaries of men, while in 1955, they received 63.9 percent.

Although the principle of "equal pay for equal work" has not yet been uniformly put into practice, there are indications that the discrep-

ancy in earnings is primarily due to the fact that women occupy positions of less responsibility and prestige than do men. The Department of Labor cites the following examples:

In public elementary and secondary schools, women were less than 20 percent of the principals; superintendents; deputy, associate, and assistant superintendents; and other central office administrators in 1970-71.

Among professional and technical workers in business, women are concentrated in the class B and class C computer programmer positions, while men are more frequently employed in the higher paying class A positions. Similarly women are usually in the lowest category of draftsmen and engineering technicians.

Among managers and proprietors, women frequently operate small retail establishments, while men may manage manufacturing plants or wholesale outfits.²

Another reason for this discrepancy in earning power may be that many women are involved with family responsibilities during their early twenties when career patterns traditionally are being established.

More women are working; many of them are employed because the financial well-being of their families requires their income, but they receive less pay than men do for their work. What bearing do programs of continuing education for women have on this problem? First, it should be noted that the discrepancy between male and female earning power decreases as the educational level increases. When earnings of men are compared with those of women with equivalent educational levels, the least disparity in income occurs when both groups have 5 years or more of postsecondary education. At that educational level, women earn 65 percent of the salaries of men. Second, the time sequence pattern of employment for women indicates their child-rearing responsibilities occupy only a part of their adult lives and that they have from 25 to 30 years of adult life in which they are able to return to work or to further education. In 1970, the youngest child of the average American woman was born when she was 30 and was in school when she was 35.

It would be foolish to say that an increase in opportunities for continuing education for women would automatically produce a parity in earnings of men and women. Job discrimination against women is pervasive and must be attacked in a variety of ways. What is clear is that many women are working, either by necessity or personal choice, and that opportunities for education, provided in ways which are appropriate to their life patterns, would increase their productivity, minimize the risk of discrimination and provide the society with more fully realized talent.

Obstacles to Graduate Study

Data on employment provide one kind of evidence for the need for continuing education programs for women. What form these pro-

² "Fact Sheet on the Earnings Gap," report of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972) p. 4. (All other data on employment in this section were furnished by the Women's Bureau.)

grams should take and what the significant characteristics of the female lifestyle are must be considered in light of other studies which probe more specifically into reasons women have not followed traditional educational patterns.

According to Elizabeth L. Cless, "More than 75 percent (some estimates are as high as 95 percent) of all intellectually qualified youngsters who do not enter college are girls." She also notes that half of the women who enter college drop out, and that women with bachelor's degrees are "less than half as likely as men to earn a graduate degree, despite the fact that, on the average, they have better undergraduate records."³

Few studies exist which attempt to analyze the reasons for the high drop-out rate of women in postsecondary education. The concern of the National Institutes of Health with a shortage of manpower in the medical and scientific professions resulted in a special report entitled "Women and Graduate Study" which analyzed the obstacles women perceived to graduate study and the leverage factors which might influence a higher number of talented women to complete their advanced work for graduate and professional degrees.

This study found that of 151,200 women who earned the bachelor's degree in 1961, 72 percent planned to attend graduate school and 42 percent had enrolled by 1964. Only two-fifths of the women enrolled in graduate school in the spring of 1964 were full-time students. They ranged from a high of approximately 92 to 95 percent in medicine and the physical sciences (which are usually heavily supported by programs of financial assistance) downward to only 34 percent for those in sociology and anthropology.

Four out of 10 women desired to attend graduate school but were unable to do so. In their opinion, the factors essential to attending graduate school were: Availability of child care centers, ability to matriculate as a part-time student and strong approval of the husband. Of particular concern to NIH was the fact that the greatest net losses in planned career fields in the 3-year period following college graduation were in areas of prime importance to medical research and education. The net loss to medicine was 48 percent, the physical sciences, 41 percent, and the "other" biosciences, 40 percent.⁴ Not surprisingly, only 6 percent of the practicing physicians in 1968 were women.

This particular study serves the purpose of confirming with data what many directors of continuing education programs for women

³ Cless, Elizabeth L., "A Modest Proposal for the Educating of Women." *American Scholar*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Autumn, 1969.

Material mentioned in footnote 3 was first cited in an unpublished report by Xandra Kayden for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. That report is titled, "Report on Women and Continuing Education: The Need for Change."

⁴ "Special Report on Women and Graduate Study," report of the Office of Program Planning and Evaluation, National Institutes of Health (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968) p. vii.

have reported—the practical obstacles to higher education for women are availability of part-time programs, financial aid and child care services. Other more ephemeral and less easily analyzed factors, however, also influence a woman's career and educational patterns. One such factor is the kind of vocational counseling available to girls when they are tentatively considering career choices and the vocational research which undergirds counseling approaches.

Vocational Counseling

In an article entitled "Sex and Occupational Choice," Rose and Elton note that for counselors who want to assist their female clients to develop occupational goals, there is very little in either theory or empirical evidence to guide them. Other research suggests that one reason existing vocational theories may be inadequate for women is that college-career orientation for them may not predict later vocational behavior, perhaps because college women do not have adequate knowledge of their abilities and vocational interests and cannot anticipate the impact that marriage and family responsibilities will have on their potential career.⁵

Studies in yet another area related to vocational counseling suggest that the assumed differences between men and women in terms of mechanical aptitude and interest and abstract reasoning may be largely the result of cultural conditioning. And, finally, the validity of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, a basic instrument for determining vocational preferences, has been questioned in terms of its value in assessing vocational interests of women, and that instrument is now being revised.⁶

Although more research is needed to produce appropriate counseling for women, it is clear that the past inability of counselors to respond to the needs of women has a direct bearing on the current necessity of providing continuing education programs. If a woman is offered only narrowly conceived choices about her future occupational opportunities, the importance of widening these opportunities at a later age becomes particularly important. In addition, if we assume that the tentativeness of a woman's commitment to a career during college is due to her primary focus on marriage and child-rearing, the point of intervention would appear to be when her major child-rearing responsibilities are over.

⁵ Rose, H. A. and Elton, C. F., "Sex and Occupational Choice," *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1971, 18 (5), p. 430.

Material mentioned in footnote 5 was first cited in an unpublished paper by Lorraine D. Eyde of the Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, U.S. Civil Service Commission. That paper is titled "Met and Unmet Needs of Women: Implications for Continuing Education for Women."

⁶ Astin, H. S., Sunlewick, N. and Dweck, S., *Women: a bibliography of their education and careers*. (Washington: Human Service Press, 1971) p. 4.

Material mentioned in footnote 6 was first cited in an unpublished paper by Lorraine D. Eyde of the Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, U.S. Civil Service Commission. That paper is titled "Met and Unmet Needs of Women: Implications for Continuing Education for Women."

Reports from directors of continuing education programs for women cite the enthusiasm and tenacity with which they respond to new educational challenges. It is surprising, therefore, to discover that two studies suggest that a larger proportion of men than women participated in adult education courses, even though women outnumbered men in the adult population. According to results of a survey by the National Opinion Research Center, the greatest discrepancy in participation rate of white women occurred between the ages of 25 to 34. Men's participation rate was 24.7 percent, whereas the rate for women in this age bracket was only 13.9 percent. The impact of parenthood appeared to have quite opposite results on the educational behavior of husbands and wives; the rates of study for mothers were lower than for nonmothers, but among men they were higher among fathers than nonfathers.⁷

One could conclude tentatively from this study that continuing education programs should be geared to women whose children have entered school. However, given the extremely limited availability of day care services at universities—only 5 percent of the programs listed in Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women offer day care—an equally credible conclusion is that we have not yet begun to develop programs which are responsive to the needs of young mothers.

One final study developed by Edward Thorndike should be mentioned. Citing a phenomenon he calls "inner growth" which reaches its height at about the age of 22, Thorndike suggests that it is easier for adults to learn than it is for children and adolescents. People between the ages of 25 and 45 have as good learning ability as people between the ages of 20 to 25, a better ability than those between 15 and 20, and a much better ability than those from 5 to 15.⁸ The significance of this study is, of course, its documentation of the idea that women are psychologically best able to learn at the very time when it is most convenient for them to do so.

Conclusions

This section began with a justification for increased opportunities for continuing education based on the simple premise that many women work and that inequities in terms of earning power would lessen as their level of education increased. Following that discussion

⁷ Johnstone, W. C. "Adult uses of education: fact and forecast." In Burns, H. W., *Sociological backgrounds of adult education*. Notes and Essays on Education for Adults, No. 42. Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1964. p. 111.

Material mentioned in footnote 7 was first cited in an unpublished paper by Lorraine D. Eyde of the Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, U.S. Civil Service Commission. That paper is titled "Met and Unmet Needs of Women: Implications for Continuing Education for Women."

⁸ Thorndike, Edward L., *Adult Learning* (New York, 1928), p. 129.

Material mentioned in footnote 8 was first cited in an unpublished report by Xandra Kayden for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. That report is titled, "Report on Women and Continuing Education: The Need for Change."

was an analysis of some factors which have inhibited career development and extended education for women. These factors range from lack of day care facilities at universities to inappropriate research in the area of vocations.

In some sense, then, the argument for continuing education programs for women is dependent on a view that such programs are a form of compensation for other inequities. Perhaps so, but it would be a mistake to end on that note. Even if job discrimination were ended; girls and young women received counseling and vocational guidance appropriate to them, and graduate schools were more receptive to their needs, there would probably always be a place for programs which allow women flexibility about their education and career patterns. After all, the primary justification for continuing education programs for women is the same justification which undergirds all of continuing education. People are different—their needs, interests and talents vary—and they must be given many different options, at many different times, to learn.

Part II

Analysis of Questionnaires

Introduction

A precise identification of all educational programs and services for women would be of invaluable benefit to legislators, educators, and to women who contemplate a return to higher education. Unfortunately, however, our resources did not permit the kind of exhaustive collection of data and followup required by such a survey. Our aims were more modest. First, we were concerned with the extent and nature of previously identified services and programs. Second, since our legislative charge is to make recommendations concerning continuing education programs and services, we wanted an opportunity to learn of funding priorities from educators who had been active in the field. Finally, we hoped that a questionnaire would enable us to identify successful and innovative models which could be replicated elsewhere.

The source document for the questionnaire was a catalog, *Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women*, published in 1971, by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor. Developed to serve an immediate and pressing need, the catalog is intended to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive, of institutions which have developed programs to meet educational needs of mature women. Identifications of programs and services were by written requests for information to over 1,800 institutions of higher education, and catalogue descriptions were, for the most part, developed by the institutions.

Often cited as evidence of a steady growth in the opportunities for continuing education, the catalogue describes 376 relevant programs and services at universities, an increase of 126 over the 1968 total of less than 250. An index provides further information about the nature of these programs and services. For example, there are 55 listings for paraprofessional training, five listings for volunteer training and 51 listings of programs offering financial aid. The criterion for inclusion in the catalogue was that a program "contained specific procedures or services designed for mature women."

Although a gain of 126 institutions within 3 years may be cause for some encouragement, the discrepancy between need and demand is suggested by the fact that 376 represents only 15 percent of the more than 2,500 institutions of higher education. The situation appears even more bleak in light of an analysis of the state of continuing education for women by Dr. Jacquelyn Mattfield, "A Decade of Continuing Education: Dead End or Open Door." That analysis combined a followup survey of selected programs listed in the Women's Bureau catalogue with a review of data collected by the American Association of

University Women on the status of women in academe. Dr. Mattfield reports that, "while 95 percent of 454 institutions responding to the AAUW survey reported that they "offer opportunities for mature women to complete degrees," only 44 percent reported having any special program for mature women. Slightly less than half make adjustments in rate of work, class hours, or customary academic policies or procedures to fit their particular needs. Few of the schools surveyed were able to give statistics or even the approximate number of women students enrolled.

This discrepancy between an implied commitment to continuing education for women and lack of administrative policies which express that commitment is further confirmed by Dr. Mattfield's analysis of the program and services described in *Continuing Education Programs and Services for Women*. She identified 156 of the 376 programs listed as ones which would admit or facilitate the admission of adult women into degree programs. Initial inquiries made of 156 established that 52 were extension programs or evening adult programs that had no particular relevance to women. Only 44 of those programs whose directors completed and returned the questionnaire were designed primarily or exclusively to accommodate the characteristic life styles of unemployed adult women. Only 13 directors reported that any data were being collected on past or present continuing education students, and there were no known studies of the alumnae.

Our research was aimed at developing further clarification of this evidence of minimal and poorly conceived commitment to the needs of mature women. We also had an additional focus of inquiry. We wanted to know sources of financial support for these programs and to what areas financial assistance should be directed if Federal funds became available.

Number of Programs

Responses were received from 190 of the program directors listed in continuing education programs and services for women. Sixty-one of these program directors indicated that they provided no special services or programs to accommodate the needs of mature women. The great majority of these programs appear to have been included in the catalogue simply because they offer courses of interest to women or because the nature of their programs permits them to offer courses at times which were convenient to women. Nine of the programs had been terminated since the Women's Bureau collected data for the catalogue. These programs had either been supported by funds granted under Title I of the Higher Education Act or by State legislatures which were reducing support for continuing education activities. Eight of the respondents indicated that they offer a single vocational course, often federally funded, in an area traditionally regarded as a "women's field."

Size of Staff and Sources of Financial Support

Numerical data from a catalogue can easily be misleading. Thus, when reference is made to the 376 institutions offering programs and services to mature women, the extensive services offered by the Minnesota Planning and Counseling Center are equated with programs which provide a single course of special interest to women. We had particular interest in determining the magnitude of resources devoted to these efforts. Our request for information to program directors contained three questions with a bearing on this issue. We asked for an estimate of the percentage of the program director's time which was devoted to the services provided women, the number of persons on the staff, and total budget devoted to the program.

In most cases, data on size of program staff and total budgets were not usable. Often directors indicated that they had access to other staff and resources of the university and were unable to separate the budget for continuing education for women from the general budget for continuing education. The great majority of directors did, however, indicate that programs and services were on a self-supporting basis.

Responses concerning the percentage of administrative time devoted to the program were somewhat more revealing and further evidence of the peripheral and tenuous status of "women's programs" on university campuses. Of the 112 programs serving the educational needs of mature women, only 36 had program directors who devoted more than half of their time to these programs. Five of these responses indicated duplication; that is, a single university offered programs at more than one campus or had two separate programs serving women.

The sparse allocation of staff resources to these programs suggested a scarcity of financial resources. We analyzed only the 36 programs retaining a program director more than half-time, assuming that other programs were self supporting or had only minimal funds available from universities. Eleven of the program directors indicated that financial support was not available from any source; i.e., courses and services were entirely self supporting. An equal number reported that they received some support from the university, either in access to supportive services or in provision of general budget support. Five universities had received foundation grants, and one had received support from a State agency for a training program. Only six program directors indicated that Federal funds had been a source of program support. As significant, perhaps, as this minimal involvement by the Federal government is the fact that the initiative for the most extensive programs came from foundations and that program directors concerned with expansion indicated that they would turn to foundations for support.

Priorities for Federal Funds

An open-ended question asked program directors to describe their

priorities for financial assistance if Federal funds were to become available. Responses to this question overwhelmingly cited the great need for financial assistance to part-time students. One respondent, in particular, captured the frustrations many directors expressed about seeing the initial enthusiasm about further education thwarted by lack of financial assistance.

In our first mini-semester, the interest of the women in continuing education was literally irrepressible. However, the major obstacle for each and every one of them was financial. For the most part, they were mothers of young families and wives of husbands still low on the professional or career ladder. None felt they could take the money it would require to finance their own education and their responsibilities were such that they could not resume full-time studies and perhaps become eligible for some kind of financial assistance.

Since financial assistance to part-time students is of central importance to program directors, we again turned to continuing education programs and services for women to determine what resources were available to women continuing their education. That catalogue lists 42 institutions which provide such financial assistance. As with the previous analysis of the number of institutions actually serving the needs of mature women, appearance was far from reality. Seven institutions indicated that they offered a limited number of scholarships, in most cases, one or two. Six institutions replied that only standard programs of Federal aid were open to women. In five cases, financial aid was tied to a specific federally funded vocational training program. Four institutions did not grant financial aid at all, but had local chapters of Aware, which had limited scholarship funds available. Tuition remission for alumnae and faculty wives was available at nine institutions. One program had been terminated and one had scholarships available only for graduates of a local high school. Seven institutions did not respond.

One institution, the University of Illinois, had set aside \$9,000 annually for part-time students, and another institution reported \$2,000 available in scholarship aid. Simmons and Sarah Lawrence Colleges, although not reflected in the total of 42, make their own financial resources available to part-time female students on a prorated basis. In summation, four institutions, at best, have allocated financial resources for part-time students in a way which exhibits a commitment to continuing education programs for women.

Some limited assistance is available to students from three different foundations. Altrusa International Foundation offers Founders Fund Vocational Aid Awards of \$50 to \$350 for women of all ages who need to work, but lack the funds necessary to help them qualify for employment. Awards are given for such purposes as job training or re-training, purchase of wage-earning equipment, or personal rehabilitation. During the last year, approximately \$50,000 were granted by the

foundation through this award program. Career advancement scholarships are awarded by the Business and Professional Women's Foundation to women of any age who need financial aid for further education or training on a full- or part-time basis. During the last 2 years, approximately \$75,000 were expended on these scholarships. The Council of Southern Universities operates a development program for women which enables those over 21 years of age who are residents of the south to engage in 1 year of intensive retraining or concentrated study on a full- or part-time basis. Approximately \$20,000 are available annually in funds.

The debilitating effect of lack of financial assistance on programs for mature women is one striking example of the effects of a Federal policy which, until recently, has virtually neglected the needs of the part-time student and of women. Students who attend school part time generally do so because they have responsibilities and financial commitments which preclude full-time attendance. Rather than exhibiting a responsiveness, however, to the high degree of motivation and great need associated with such attendance, the Federal Government has concentrated its programs of financial assistance on full-time students.

An earlier survey by the Council revealed a vast array of programs for financial support, ranging from funds granted under the Social Security Amendments of 1965, which in fiscal year 1971 totaled \$624 million, to special grant and loan programs for the disadvantaged. At that time, no grant programs existed which provided support for part-time students, and loans were available only for students registered at least half-time.

Exemplary Programs and Further Priorities

Although data from the questionnaires presented a bleak picture of the resources available to continuing education programs for women, we were more fortunate in identification of programs and services which had been particularly imaginatively conceived and successful in meeting the needs of women.

One criticism of this technique of attempting to describe successful programs is important both because it indicates the limitations of replicating canned programs and because it conveys an attitude basic to the most effective programs—that program development must be based on sensitive and creative dialogue with women about their needs. To our request for descriptions of techniques which had been particularly effective in her program, one respondent replied:

What program directors need is *not* a list of simple ideas expressible in two sentences and inexpensive. Program directors need a *consultant* who can help them to: *identify* the people they intend to serve, collect a group of such clients, learn how to get these clients to understand and then express their *situation*. Then they need help in designing *creative* solutions for that *particular* situation. Then they need training or an assistant in communicating

this solution, involving people, and a consultant again to encourage them to be flexible to redesign the bugs out of their first experimental solutions.

Although this dictum is important, any study based on a survey risks a loss of the concrete details about programs which convey a sense of how lives are being changed. An analysis of the data does not capture the vitality, ingenuity and commitment of program directors. Many respondents supplemented the questionnaire with letters, written materials and additional comments. Following are some of the common themes and threads of these materials.

University Community Relations

Community service has increasingly become a concern of universities. With the assistance of substantial allocations of Federal funds, new approaches are being explored and new relationships created in an attempt to bring university resources to bear on local problems. With virtually no Federal assistance, continuing education programs for women are producing precisely that effect—a network of voluntary relationships between university and community which is based on a desire to solve a common problem.

Many programs were initiated by volunteers from the community and staffed by them during the early stages of program operation. The Greater Miami Dade Junior College is one striking example of this successful involvement of volunteers with the university. Formed in 1965 as a result of a community workshop on continuing education for women, the staff donated their services until they received a grant under Title I of the Higher Education Act. Currently the program operates with an advisory council composed of representatives of seven area educational institutions and 20 members elected to represent the business community. Their major program is an information and referral service to women who want to go back to school, volunteering or employment. Referral people in each of the participating educational institutions, the business community, and in educational and training programs ease the transition back to school or employment by providing individual and sympathetic assistance.

The Women's Opportunity Center at the University of California at Irvine similarly provides counseling, guidance and referral for employment and education opportunities. The center has served over 1,300 women and is staffed totally by volunteers who have contributed over 3,500 volunteer hours.

In addition to drawing on the community for volunteer assistance, programs have been active in increasing the skills of volunteers in local service agencies so that they more effectively serve the community. Ohio State University provides workshops for volunteers in areas which range from planned parenthood to senior citizens. The Extension Division of Rutgers University provides extension consultants to voluntary organizations.

Client-Orientation

Universities are increasingly being criticized for their impersonality, their irrelevance to the needs and interests of the individual, and their focus on research to the exclusion of their original mission—teaching. Responses from directors of continuing education programs for women, however, show a healthy acceptance of the view that education is not a mechanical transfer of facts from teacher to student, but a process in which the expectations, hopes and fears of the student bear heavily on her capacity to learn. This concern with the psychological factors which promote learning is reflected in many ways. Perhaps the clearest expression of this interest is in two responses to our request for descriptions of program methods which had been particularly successful. One woman commented simply, "A sympathetic ear." Another elaborated on this view.

I would hope that you would start with the adult education view of education: a concern for the person, exploration with representatives of this audience-to-be . . . then a program design which brings whatever services are needed by this population and then a careful evaluation with the client, a redesign and a use of leaders from among this clientele to be among the future leaders.

With almost absolute consistency, program directors commented on the apprehensions of women about their ability to succeed in college and the importance of finding ways to alleviate those fears.

Most directors stress the importance of effective guidance and counseling, particularly during the early stages of a client's involvement with the program. There is also heavy emphasis on the kind of psychological support a woman can receive from her peers. One of the more successful community college programs, Potential of Women (POW) at Jamestown Community College in New York, arranges the sequence of courses for returning women so that they take their courses together during the first year and then, when they have developed confidence about their ability, integrates them into the standard university program.

Similarly, students at the Center for Continuing Education at Sarah Lawrence begin their program by taking courses at the center from faculty who have exhibited special interest and ability in teaching mature women. Other techniques which have been successful involve the use of peer counselors and of advisory committees with student representatives.

Motivation to Learn

Another theme in comments by program directors is the tenacity and enthusiasm of women (after they overcome their initial apprehensions) about their ability to master course materials and academic requirements. Although few program directors have a financial base which permits collection of data on clientele, respondents stress the

persistence of enrollees in pursuing their educational objectives and the very real sense of self-fulfillment that these programs offer.

Sarah Lawrence College and the University of Minnesota have been able, as a result of foundation support, to analyze results of participation in their programs. Results of these analyses show both a higher retention rate and a higher level of achievement for women returning to higher education than for undergraduates following more standard university patterns. The potential importance of these initial findings is obvious and goes far beyond issues of concern only to women. The data support the views of a growing minority that people learn best when they are motivated to learn and that opportunities for education must be provided throughout the lifetime of an individual.

Conclusions

University based programs designed to serve the educational needs of mature women are, by and large, inadequately financed, understaffed, and peripheral to the major concerns of the university. Where gains have been made and substantial programs exist, they are usually the result of long and tenacious efforts to secure foundation funds and university commitments to the program. The effort to provide continuing education opportunities for women has been particularly hampered by the lack of Federal programs of financial assistance for part-time students.

Despite the scarcity of financial resources allocated to these programs, a number of gains have been made which have bearing on the university's ability to respond to changing social needs. New links between the community and university have been developed. Attention has been focused on the validity of the traditional "lockstep pattern" of education and on the rigidity of rules concerning transfer of credit and part-time study. Perhaps most importantly, continuing education programs for women have revitalized the idea that the most important kind of learning results in changes in life style and in self image and often requires long and difficult struggle.

One of the more significant findings of *A Question of Stewardship*, the sixth annual report of the National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education, was that the Federal Government typically turned to universities for assistance in meeting immediate and pressing community problems. Legislation was enacted in an atmosphere of crisis, often with no program prototypes or substantial evidence on which to consider alternative approaches to a problem.

It is ironic, then, that the Federal Government has failed to build on the extensive experience of successful university efforts to meet the continuing education needs of women. Virtually without Federal support, a 10-year record of service has been established. Failures have occurred; successes have been scored, and women are now in a

position where Federal funds would enable them to implement lessons they have learned. One probable reason for this lack of attention is that the continuing education needs of women probably will never be a volatile and dramatic issue like drug abuse or race relations. The fabric of society is not threatened in an immediate way by a failure to respond to the needs of women for education. What is at stake is the very old and basic issue of the importance of providing all citizens an opportunity to develop their full potential.

Part III

Analysis of Federal Responses to Need for Continuing Education Programs for Women

Introduction

Part I of this study describes some of the reasons why specialized educational programs for women are necessary, and part II suggests that with nominal Federal and State resources, a number of imaginative and important programs have been developed to meet these needs. Part III is a brief review of Federal programs and activities which currently support continuing education for women or which could be redesigned to meet those needs.

We wanted to accomplish several purposes with the analysis in this part. First, we began with an assumption that Federal legislation and programs exist which could be used to provide financial assistance for badly needed research on women and their educational needs and to support the expansion of services and educational offerings at universities. We also suspected that neither Federal officials nor practitioners in the field of women's programs had fully realized the potential of current legislation since the former are unused to viewing women as an educationally disadvantaged group and the latter tend to view foundations, rather than the Federal Government, as the most promising source of financial assistance. In addition to testing this assumption, we wanted to analyze the implications of the Education Amendments of 1972 so that we could suggest to professionals in the field of continuing education promising sources of financial assistance.

Although there has been very little Federal support for the kinds of university programs surveyed in part II of this study, the Federal Government is heavily involved in the support of continuing education programs which affect women. The activities of the Cooperative Extension Service and the Civil Service Commission both have bearing on the kinds of roles and educational experiences available to women. We wanted to determine the long-range purposes which those funds were intended to accomplish and the congruence of those purposes with the joint needs of women for self fulfillment and professional development and of the society for a maximization of human potential.

Cooperative Extension Service

Established in 1914, the Cooperative Extension Service is best known for its efforts to bring university research to bear on the problems of rural life and for its use of extension agents to work directly with individuals. Almost from the inception of the service, these activities have included a focus on family living. While farmers were receiving results of the latest research on soil preservation and marketing, their wives received instruction on topics designed to improve their capability as homemakers, such as sewing, family relationships, budgeting and nutrition. (It should be noted at this point that all instruction offered through the Cooperative Extension Service is noncredit.)

The magnitude of this effort at the current time is suggested by some recent figures from the Department of Agriculture. During fiscal year 1971, a total of \$64,580,000 in Federal, State and county funds were committed to the budget for home economics. Slightly over 20 percent of the total effort of the service in extension was devoted to two programs, food and nutrition, and improved family living. In terms of personnel, 311,954 man days were allocated to the food and nutrition program and 530,764 man days were allocated to the family living program. The Department of Agriculture estimates that over 8 million people were reached directly or indirectly through these programs.

Although the basic aim of the improved family living program has not changed significantly since its inception—its basic concern is “to acquaint families with information, services and skills helpful in creation of a sound and stable domestic life”—the focus of some of the educational offerings has, of course, evolved with changing social needs. The growth during the last decade of research on early child development has led to more sophisticated approaches to child rearing. An interest in family budgeting has evolved into a focus on the whole area of consumer education. Increasingly, women are realizing that the well-being of their families cannot be separated from that of their towns or country, and they are discussing areas of public policy.

The food and nutrition program represents a totally new effort of the Cooperative Extension Service and one which has considerable impact on women. Initiated in November of 1969 with an appropriation of \$28 million, it now has a budget of \$50 million. Its purpose is to improve the nutrition and dietary habits of low-income people by training paraprofessionals to work with community groups and agencies and with families. Currently, there are about 10,000 aides, each of whom has received an initial 3-week training course in food preparation, cooking, nutrition and teaching. In 1971, 57.9 percent of the more than 300,000 families served were in urban areas, and 60.5 percent of the total families served had incomes of less than \$3,000 per year. Like the county agents, the nutrition aides depend on persuasion

and personal contact to convince families of the importance of changing dietary habits.

The Cooperative Extension Service is unique in the magnitude of Federal, local, and university resources on which it can call. Its extension agents long ago developed an approach to teaching which is just now being revitalized by directors of continuing education for women. The importance of learning from one's peers and of group interaction as a method of reinforcing learning are at the heart of both extension activities and many programs of continuing education for women. By its new record of service to urban areas and its use of paraprofessional, the Cooperative Extension Service has shown that it can respond to a new challenge.

Other challenges remain. The service was established to serve a rural economy in which large families were encouraged, household conveniences were unavailable, and the great majority of women spent their lives in the home. Today, half of all women 35 to 64 years of age are in the labor force, as compared with one out of four in 1940.

Convincing women to take the initial step to return to school has been a major problem of continuing education programs for women. Upon completion of retraining programs which conveyed the kinds of possibilities available to women through continuing education, extension agents in home economics would be in a unique position to provide information about continuing education opportunities. In addition to the trust they have already generated, they have the additional advantage of being university-based and therefore familiar with its resources.

Training Activities Sponsored by the Civil Service Commission

During the last decade the Federal Government has increasingly become involved in providing training opportunities for its employees. These training activities, the great majority of which are noncredit, are designed to serve a multitude of purposes and represent a commitment to the concept that both the Government and the individual will profit by the availability of new learning throughout a working career. Some of these purposes are expressed as follows: (1) To improve the performance of current duties; (2) to provide opportunities for employees to reach their full potential; (3) to keep abreast of the state of the art and maintain specialized proficiencies; (4) to accommodate to changing equipment or mission assignment; and (5) to develop skills unavailable through existing recruitment sources.

Two questions are crucial in terms of the impact of these training programs on women. Who receives training and for what purpose are they trained? Women, by and large, occupy the lower paid and less prestigious positions within the Federal Government. A recent study of the status of women employees within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare revealed that the median grade level for men

throughout HEW is 10.9, while the median level for women is 5.1. While the great majority of the employees below or at the GS-9 level (annual salary of \$11,046) are women, the great majority of employees above that level are men. No women have a rating of GS-18, the highest career level, and only 6.9 percent of the employees at the GS-17 level are female.

Clearly, in order to serve the needs of women for professional advancement, a great deal of training effort would have to be concentrated on the GS-1—GS-9 levels and that training would have to be incorporated within a career mobility system which coupled training completion with promotional opportunities.

The Bureau of Training of the Civil Service Commission annually submits a report which analyzes data by a number of factors—instances of participation, man-hours, level of training, sex, and agency, to name a few. The most recent available report of the Commission is for fiscal year 1970. That report describes a 7.4 percent increase in training participation for women between fiscal years 1969 and 1970, while the male employees received 2 percent less training. Thirty-five percent of the female population received training in fiscal year 1970 as compared to 32 percent in fiscal year 1969, while the number of males decreased from 41 percent to 39 percent of their population over the same time period.

Although this increase obviously reflects some improvement in opportunities for women, the data are misleading without some close analysis of the kinds of training provided and the nature of the recipients. The Civil Service Commission also presents comparative data on training opportunities for men and women by grade level. For GS-1 to GS-4 levels, 47 percent of the men received training as compared with 31 percent of the women, and for GS-5 to GS-8 levels, 63.7 percent of the men received training as opposed to 37.8 percent of the women. For GS levels 9 to 12, the percentage of participation is nearly equal, and women in the GS-16 to GS-18 levels were trained at a percentage rate of 124.2 percent as opposed to a 53.3 percent of training for men at those levels. (The high percentage of training for female executives is partially attributed to the fact that the 13 female executives of HEW received 43 instances of training.)

A clear pattern appears to exist. For the lower grade levels which have a preponderance of women—and one could assume, where the greatest need for upward mobility exists—men receive the bulk of the training. For those grade levels which require demonstrated past achievement, women receive the bulk of the training. Given the skewed pattern of promotion within the Federal Government, one could assume that women at the GS-16 to GS-18 levels are exceptionally competent. Yet they, rather than the women who need opportunities for upward mobility, are the beneficiaries of unusually abundant training

opportunities. Another fact is important. Only 5 percent of the 1,665 Federal employees participating in training of more than 120 days were women.

Although thorough analysis of the activities of the Bureau of Training is beyond the scope of this study, it should be noted that costs of training (excluding trainee salaries) were over \$137 million in fiscal year 1970. Training, in other words, is a multimillion dollar Federal enterprise which has not yet met adequately the needs of the majority of women within the Federal Government.

Education Legislation

Four pieces of legislation, in addition to the Education Amendments of 1972, have provisions which would permit the funding of activities related to the continuing education needs of mature women. Primary among these is Title I of the Higher Education Act which has as its primary purpose the amelioration of community problems by the use of university resources. Since the inception of this program in 1966, community problems have been defined to include issues of concern to mature women who either wanted to return to higher education or to employment. The program itself has never had an appropriation of more than \$10 million, and since 1969, the appropriation has been \$9.4 million. During 1967, \$235,518 of the total was spent on programs specifically designed to serve women, and this figure has steadily decreased to a total of \$121,920 in fiscal year 1971.

Thirty of the 59 programs funded since 1967 have involved some form of counseling for women. However, the variety in these programs and in the remaining 29 does not lend itself to easy generalization. Brief descriptions of some of the programs funded under this title convey some idea of the potential social impact of a more total Federal commitment to women's programs.

The University of Pennsylvania established a suburban action program at the human resources center of the university. Suburban women are trained at the center and then sent to five geographic areas to train other women to be interpreters of problems and encouragers of social change. A program at the University of Nebraska develops the capabilities of retired persons and housewives to serve in 155 community service agencies. The participants are given an orientation and 40 hours of instruction in the functions of the selected agency. A research center at Alverno College has been established to publish materials relating to sex discrimination and under utilization of women and to develop conferences on women's studies.

Education Professions Development Act

Enacted in 1967 as title V of the Higher Education Act, EPDA reflected a growing concern for the manpower needs of the elementary and secondary schools; a decreasing emphasis on the doctorate, and a

reevaluation of the training of educational paraprofessionals. The result of the legislation was a series of programs that attempted to improve and increase the education personnel at all levels of educational activity.

Two sections of that act are relevant to the provision of continuing education opportunities for women. Under section 504, the Commissioner of Education "is authorized to make grants to or contracts with institutions of higher education . . . for the purpose of . . . (3) encouraging qualified persons to enter or reenter the field of teaching; (4) encouraging artists, craftsmen, artisans, scientists, and persons from other professions and vocations, and homemakers to undertake teaching or related assignments on a part-time basis for temporary periods."

During fiscal year 1972, only \$145,230 was granted to projects which would encourage homemakers to undertake teaching or related assignments on a part-time basis. Tulsa public schools received \$120,509 to educate Indian housewives and artists and craftsmen to work in the schools as paraprofessionals and Washington Technical Institute received \$24,721 to train volunteers to serve in the local school system. No projects were funded to encourage qualified persons to enter or return to the field of teaching.

Title V-E of EPDA funds higher education personnel fellowships which enable institutions of higher education to train administrators or educational specialists. Individuals then apply directly to institutions for fellowships, with awards at the discretion of the institution. In the first year of the program (1969-70) 47 percent of the fellowships were awarded to women, most of them in master's degree programs and a few in the small number of doctoral programs provided.

Vocational Education Act of 1963

Passed in 1963 and later amended in 1968 in a fresh text, the VEA was intended to strengthen and improve the quality of vocational education and to expand the vocational education opportunities in the country.

Under part F of the amended Vocational Education Act of 1963, a State plan may include projects designed to "(c) prepare youths and adults in the dual role of homemaker and wage-earner." To a request for information on the magnitude of these programs and their success, the acting director of the division of vocational and technical education replied that in fiscal year 1971, approximately 590,000 adults were enrolled in consumer and homemaking classes, the majority of whom were women. Information was not available on the number of enrollees carrying dual responsibilities of homemaker-wage-earner, but in the courses offered, particular emphasis was given to the study of home management, consumer education, home improvement and relationships within the family. Responsibility for operation of these programs

lies with the State supervisors of home economics in the State departments of education.

Part C, section 132 of the Vocational Education Act provides funds for: (3) Experimental, developmental and pilot programs and projects designed to test the effectiveness of research findings; (4) demonstration and dissemination projects; (5) new vocational curricula; and (6) projects in the development of new areas and occupations such as—(A) research and experimental projects designed to identify new careers in such fields as mental and physical health, crime prevention and correction, welfare, education, municipal services, child care, and recreation requiring less training than professional positions.

Congress has appropriated funds for this section in only two fiscal years. In fiscal year 1971, \$17.5 million was available and in fiscal year 1972, \$9 million was appropriated. Although the legislative language is general enough to permit funding of demonstration projects relevant to the needs of mature women—projects which develop ways of reducing sexual stereotypes of vocations, of assessing employer attitudes toward part-time employment and of encouraging the employment of mature women in professions listed in the legislation—only one project has been funded with any relevance to the concerns of women.

Cooperative Research Act

Enacted in 1954, the Cooperative Research Act was designed to give the Office of Education great capability to undertake research relevant to its mission.

That act has similarly broad language which could permit the funding of research projects of interest to women. The Commissioner is authorized "to make grants to universities and colleges—for research, survey and demonstrations in the field of education . . . and for the dissemination of information derived from educational research." In fiscal year 1972, \$4 million was awarded in research grants under this act and \$9 million in developmental grants. The Office of Education could not identify any funded projects of interest to women.

Education Amendments of 1972

In one area—that of student assistance—the higher education amendments to the Higher Education Act provide a clear response to the needs of mature women who are continuing their education. In the past, comparatively little Federal support has been available to part-time students, and women have been particularly hampered by this lack since family responsibilities often preclude full-time attendance as well as a commitment of financial resources for part-time study. The amendments open two sources of financial support to part-time students, economic opportunity grants and the work-study program, with the specification that awards be prorated on the basis of numbers of hours of attendance. Two new programs, the basic opportunity grants and

the State student incentive programs, will be open to part-time students and provide eligibility for students at accredited post-secondary vocational and proprietary schools.

The impact of other sections of the legislation on women's programs is inconclusive and will depend on the interpretation of legislative authority as expressed by Federal guidelines and may require activity on the part of advocates for these programs to bring their needs to the attention of Federal officials. Following is a discussion of some of the sections in the law which may prove to be a source of Federal support for continuing education programs for women.

A key section in the new legislation is section 404 of Title III which authorizes support for improvement of post-secondary education. Intended to finance the fund for the improvement of post-secondary education, this section provides funds for a wide variety of purposes which encourage new approaches to education and the development of ways to serve groups which have not been reached by traditional methods. Section 404 reads as follows:

The Secretary is authorized to make grants to, and contracts with, institutions of post-secondary education . . . to improve post-secondary educational opportunities by providing assistance to such educational institutions and agencies for—

(1) encouraging the reform, innovation, and improvement of post-secondary education and providing equal educational opportunity for all;

(2) the creation of institutions and programs involving new paths to career and professional training, and new combinations of academic and experimental learning;

(3) the establishment of institutions and programs based on the Technology of Communications;

(4) the carrying out in post-secondary educational institutions of changes in internal structure and operations designed to clarify institutional priorities and purposes;

(5) the design and introduction of cost effective methods of instruction and operation;

(6) the introduction of institutional reforms designed to expand individual opportunities for entering and reentering institutions and pursuing programs of study tailored to individual needs;

(7) the introduction of reforms in graduate education, in the structure of academic professions, and in the recruitment and retention of faculties; and

(8) the creation of new institutions and programs for examining and awarding credentials to individuals, and the introduction of reforms in current institutional practices related thereto.

The majority of the priorities listed in the legislation have direct bearing on the aims and methodology of women's programs. Clearly, the provision of equal educational opportunities for all will require special institutional arrangements and institutional reforms which acknowledge the unique difficulties of adults who have not followed the traditional patterns of higher education. They will require a reexamination of the kinds of learning which can be accredited and of the view that the validity of college credits is lost after a given time period.

Another area in which the interests of women should be reflected is that of the expansion of the services of community colleges. Community colleges are increasingly the vehicle which serves the needs of people for whom traditional patterns of education are inappropriate, and many of them have already begun to develop "women's programs." Section 1014 authorizes expansion grants for these colleges with the following language: The Commissioner is authorized to make grants to community colleges to assist them—(3) in altering or modifying their educational programs in order that they may (a) more adequately meet the needs, interests and potential benefits of the communities they serve, or (b) provide educational programs especially suited to the needs of the educationally disadvantaged persons residing in such communities.

These grants are authorized by Title X of the act, community colleges, and occupational education, which also provides for the development of a statewide plan which would achieve the goal of making available to all residents of the State an opportunity to attend a community college . . . Related to this aim is a provision that each State establish a commission representative of various institutions of higher education in the State which may appoint committees or task forces. That commission is eligible to receive grants which will enable it to undertake inventories and studies with respect to post-secondary educational resources in the State. The ultimate aim of such studies would be improved planning which would permit all persons within the State who desire and who can benefit from post-secondary education an opportunity to do so.

A mandate clearly exists for studies which would assess the availability and the appropriateness of educational resources for women. Crucial in the implementation of these sections will be an interpretation of educationally disadvantaged which acknowledges that mature women face unique obstacles in their pursuit of higher education and an involvement of groups representing women in the work of State commissions.

Section 140(a) authorizes the establishment of a National Commission on the Financing of Post-Secondary Education with funding authorization of \$1.5 million. The commission consists of two Members of the Senate, two Members of the House and up to 13 members appointed by the President.

Although the focus of the Commission will be on an analysis of the reasons for the financial difficulties of institutions of post-secondary education and on the development of effective means of Federal and local support, the legislative language specifies that approaches to financing should be considered in light of the extent to which each (method) would advance the national goal of making post-secondary education available to all individuals, including returning veterans, having the desire and ability to continue their education.

Again, the effect of this study on increasing educational opportunity for "mature women" will depend upon the extent to which the views of practitioners and clients of women's programs are brought to the attention of the Commission and its staff. Persons who have been actively involved in the development of new opportunities for women acknowledge that traditional forms of student assistance may not be adequate to the goal of making post-secondary education accessible to all individuals. Just one example of the particular problems of women is their extreme reluctance to accept loans to finance their education because of the drain on family financial resources and their lack of confidence about their own future earning power.

Language in Title III, section 304 of the law which is designed to assist developing institutions is similar to that concerning community colleges in that an appropriate interpretation would permit increased support for women's programs. Section 304 specifies that: "Funds . . . should be available for: (c) introduction of new curricula and curricular materials; and (d) development and operation of Cooperative Education programs involving alternate periods of academic study and business or public employment."

Section 417 (b) is only peripherally related to women's programs, but some of the provisions of the section would appear to allow funding for supportive services for women, at least for low income women. A problem is that the introductory language to the section specifically refers to youths from low-income families, but there is repeated emphasis placed throughout the section on college dropouts and persons resuming their college education.

The aim of the section is to encourage secondary-school or college dropouts of demonstrated aptitude to reenter educational programs, including post-secondary programs. The section provides both for "special services for disadvantaged students" while they are enrolled at recipient institutions and for the establishment of educational opportunity centers in areas with major concentrations of low-income populations. Those centers will provide assistance in filling out applications for admission and for financial assistance and counseling and tutoring services after admission.

Finally, the bill authorizes the establishment of a National Institute of Education which is to be independent of the Office of Education and to concern itself with the conduct and dissemination of educational research. Given its broad mandate it would appear that a wide range of research activities relevant to mature women could be funded through the Institute.

Conclusions

In writing this study, we assumed that Federal responses to the needs of women for university-level continuing education had been minimal. That assumption has been confirmed. What surprised us was

the availability of resources both in terms of legislative authority and funds, which could be used to expand existing programs, develop more supportive services and provide a necessary research base. Two obvious examples are the Cooperative Extension Service and the training activities funded through the Civil Service Commission. Currently over \$6.4 million in Federal and local funds are being spent on educational programs which enhance a woman's capability as a homemaker, while perhaps \$500,000 in Federal funds are being spent for college credit-granting programs. This imbalance is serious in light of the fact that half of all women aged 34 to 64 are in the labor force.

The potential of the Education Amendments of 1972 to serve women is great. We have identified some of the ways this service could be accomplished. Opportunities for a more substantial commitment to women have, however, been missed in the past. Our hope is that the Federal Government and women, working together, will use this new legislation as the vehicle which will finally validate this country's commitment to the provision of educational opportunities for all its people.

What Should Be Done

Our review of continuing education programs for women revealed many dramatic examples of successful efforts to serve women. By and large, however, these programs have resulted from long and tenacious struggles by women to secure funds and university support. Nationally, there is no consistent commitment to respond to, or even to consider, the unique needs of women who wish to return to higher education.

When we make our annual report concerning the effectiveness of the Federal effort in terms of continuing education and community service, we will have specific recommendations concerning ways the Federal Government could more substantially aid in providing services to this segment of the population. The following suggestions have been developed to assist universities in identifying issues and problems relevant to their capacity to service the needs of women.

1. *Financial Aid to Part-time Students*—In the Sixth Annual Report of the National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education, we recommended that adults involved in postsecondary education on a part-time basis be eligible for financial assistance according to personal need. The results of our survey of directors of continuing education programs for women confirmed the great importance of widening programs of financial assistance to serve part-time students. The recently passed Education Amendments of 1972 appear to accomplish that purpose by specifically mandating that part-time students be eligible for a number of new and currently existing programs.

We urge that when institutional flexibility exists concerning choice of grant recipient, priority be given to part-time students.

2. *Provision of Day Care*—A study by the National Institutes of

Health revealed that availability of child care centers was one of the three major determining factors in a woman's decision to attend graduate school. Yet, only 5 percent of the 376 identified continuing education programs serving women provide day care facilities. For a woman who wants to continue child-rearing with her intellectual and educational growth, such facilities are essential.

We urge that colleges and universities assist directors of women's programs to establish day care centers.

3. A repeated theme in the comments of directors of continuing education programs for women was the importance of providing counselors who are both sympathetic with the apprehensions of adults returning to higher education and familiar with university resources and degree requirements. In addition, for women who want to return to work, counselors must be aware of the relevance of educational programs to the local job market. We previously recommended that fellowships be available to increase the number of skilled counselors for adults to advise an educational program.

We urge that such a fellowship program be established and that universities and colleges immediately make skilled counseling services available to part-time students.

4. Administrative policies of colleges and universities, by and large, are inappropriate to the needs of women wishing to return to higher education. These institutions vary widely in their willingness to accept credits earned at other institutions or credits earned beyond a given time span. In addition, there are great differences in the willingness of institutions to accept credits earned through the college level examination program (CLEP).

We urge that colleges and universities evaluate their policies concerning transfer of credit and acceptability of the results of CLEP examinations with the aim of providing greater transferability to part-time students.

5. With the exception of a few pioneering programs—such as the bay area consortium and the program sponsored by Miami Dade Junior College—no resources exist to help a woman discover the whole range of educational voluntary and occupational opportunities in her geographic area. Even within one university, it may be virtually impossible for an individual to discover the extent of available educational opportunities and the program most appropriate to her background and future goals.

We urge that each university and college establish a "switch-board service" which will be able to provide information on educational opportunities and requirements within the institution and to develop interinstitutional educational arrangements for complementary educational opportunities at other institutions.